Amendment to the Specification:

Replace the sentence immediately following the title of the application with the following sentences:

This application is a divisional of U.S. application 09/917,370 titled "System for converting optical beams to collimated flat-top beams", filed July 27, 2001, which in turn is a continuation-in-part of U.S. application 09/461,365 titled "Refractive optical system that converts a laser beam to a collimated flat-top beam", filed December 15, 1999 (which issued as US Patent 6,295,168 on September 25, 2001). The disclosures of these two previously filed applications are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.